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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE GRANT OFFERS \$200,000 FOR
TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

August 1, 2006 Application Deadline

Helena, MT - June 15, 2006—Montana Department of Commerce Director Anthony J. Preite announces that \$200,000 in tourism “bed tax” funds are available for tourism-related projects through the agency’s 2006 Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) Grants. The deadline for TIIP grant applications is Tuesday, August 1, 2006.

“We invite non-profit organizations or governments from across the state to use our TIIP grants as part of the funding package they put together to improve Montana’s visitor attractions and facilities,” said Tony Preite.

Governor Brian Schweitzer points out that since its creation in 1995, TIIP has invested more than \$2.2 million in "bed tax" funds into 49 projects in 33 communities across Montana. This investment has helped create over \$29 million in new or improved tourism facilities in Montana.

“The TIIP grants have helped many museums and historic properties better tell their community as well as Montana’s story. Wildlife education centers, dinner tour trains, arts and cultural centers and many of the other activities Montanans and our visitors enjoy have benefited from this investment of tourism tax dollars,” said Governor Schweitzer.

The Commerce Department’s TIIP grants are for tourism-related “brick and mortar” projects sponsored and operated by non-profit organizations or local and tribal governments. Eligible projects include construction associated with building new and/or remodeling or preserving existing tourism and recreation attractions, historical sites and artifacts; costs associated with purchasing new and/or existing tourism and recreation attractions, historical sites and artifacts; and equipment purchased for specific tourism project operation.

The guidelines and applications for the 2006 TIIP Grants are available on Travel Montana’s Intranet site www.travelmontana.mt.gov/forms/ or you can contact Travel Montana’s Victor Bjornberg at 406-841-2795, FAX 406-841-2871, vbjornberg@mt.gov.

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